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JOHN MILTON.

The Silver Series of English Classics

MILTON'S

PARADISE LOST

Books I. and II.

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

ALEXANDER S. TWOMBLY

SILVER, BURDETT AND COMPANY

NEW YORK BOSTON CHICAGO

1897

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INTRODUCTION.

Milton has been represented as "a grand and solitary figure in English literature"; as standing "apart, dignified, sublime, the great epic poet of our language."

This description is suited to the poet not only as a literary character, but as a man, — dwelling apart from the busy world in the seclusion of his own meditations, and at last, in his blindness, "from the cheerful ways of men cut off."

Although obliged to take sides in the political struggle between King and Parliament, and to become the secretary of Cromwell, the work he wrought was that of an author in his study rather than that of a man of affairs. He was alienated from his family, as husband and father, and even in religious affiliations; being neither Presbyterian, Puritan, nor Independent, he found no great comfort in the rites or fellowships of the church. His opinions were his own; he shared them with few of his contemporaries and lived in communion with the dead more than with the living; with "Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides, and Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old."

Milton was born in Cheapside, Bread Street, London, December 9, 1608. The house wherein he first saw the light remained a part of his estate as long as he lived. His father, "an eminent scrivener" (or notary, who drew up contracts), was educated at Oxford, but was disinherited by

his father, a bigoted Romanist, because he embraced the reformed doctrines.

The coat of arms of the family, a spread eagle with two heads, came with Milton's mother, Sarah Caston, who was celebrated for her piety and her liberality to the poor. With the expectation of a fair inheritance, Milton at fifteen years of age was sent to St. Paul's school, where he studied hard, especially in poetry and the classics, and laid the foundation for his future eminence.

In his seventeenth year (1625), he was admitted as a pensioner at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he soon became distinguished for his elegant style and skill in the use of the Latin language. But he disliked the discipline of the college, then more strict than in later days, and was free in his censures on the established system.

His parents destined him for the church, but he was unwilling to subscribe to the Articles upon coming of age, and when he left the college in 1629, he retired to his father's country house at Horton in Buckinghamshire, where for six years he gave himself up to severe study. His facility in the perusal of Greek and Latin authors was remarkable, and his industry was unwearied. It is undoubtedly true that few men, if any, have mastered more things worth mastering in art, letters, and scholarship than did Milton in these five years of self-centered isolation. It is supposed that during this period he wrote his "Arcades," "Comus," "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," and "Lycidas." The "Masque of Comus" was acted in 1634 in Ludlow, at the residence of the Earl of Bridgewater, who had been appointed Lord President of Wales, the play being

founded on an occurrence in his family. The Earl's sons and his daughter took part in the play.

Milton's mother died in 1637, and he went abroad. At Paris he was presented to the famous historian Grotius, then Swedish ambassador. During the year or more of his travels, he visited the principal cities of Italy, and was cordially received by distinguished scholars who appreciated his profound and elegant attainments. At Florence he saw Galileo in his retirement at Arcetri, and in Rome, where he remained two months, Cardinal Barbarini showed him great civility. In Naples he was introduced to Manso, Marquis of Villa, the patron and biographer of Tasso. To this marquis, Milton addressed his beautiful Latin poem. Dr. Johnson, who was severe in his criticism of Milton's opinions, allowed that this poem must have raised English literary ability to a high place in the estimation of Italian scholars at that time. It had been Milton's intention to remain abroad longer, but news of political troubles in England hastened his return. "I considered it," he wrote, "dishonorable to be enjoying myself at my ease in foreign lands, while my countrymen were striking a blow for freedom." He returned to England about the time of Charles's second expedition against the Scots, not long before the assembling of the Long Parliament. He took lodgings in Fleet Street, London, and soon hired a large house in Aldersgate Street, where he received as pupils the sons of gentlemen who were his friends. His allowance from his father was but little, and pedagogy, to which he turned for an increase of income, did not prove to be a success.

Literary pursuits were more to his taste, and, waxing warm on the political condition of his country, he now, in 1641, became involved in the struggle of the times. He published his treatise on Reformation, against the bishops of the Established Church; also other books and pamphlets in favor of the new ideas. Milton at that period simply desired to bring the Episcopal form nearer the apostolic standard.

He afterward engaged hotly in the great questions of the day, seeing that it needed a strong pen to combat the documents put forth by the Royalists. Milton the controversialist was, however, much inferior to Milton the poet. In 1643, in his thirty-fifth year, he married Mary Powell, the gay daughter of a Cavalier, but found little happiness in wedded life. When his wife returned to her father's house, he published, in 1644, his "Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce," a work which added nothing to his fame. The same year, among other treatises, he issued the "Areopagitica, or Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing," one of the finest of his prose productions.

In 1648–49 he wrote against the Presbyterians, who condemned the Protector for the death of Charles I. In 1649–50, he answered the book of the Leyden professor, Salmasius, called "Defensio Regia," in support of the divine right of kings. Milton's reply, "Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio," was published in 1651. It was in the preparation of this work that Milton sacrificed his little remaining eyesight, the sight of one eye having been previously lost. In 1652 he became totally blind. A second defense followed, in 1654, containing an eloquent eulogy on Cromwell. The

author had been appointed secretary to the Council of State in 1649, and afterwards (1653) became secretary to Cromwell.

The Restoration of Charles II., in 1660, overthrew the political party to the support of whose principles Milton had given twenty of the best years of his life. He shared the fate of other Independents, in the downfall of his political hopes, but was thus left free to take up that nobler work for which he was better suited, — the pursuit of literature. With the fall of the republic, he could once more entertain his lifelong dream, — the ambition to write a great epic. It was at this time (1665) that he completed his grand work, "Paradise Lost," which had been begun several years before. He also wrote his "History of England," "Paradise Regained," and "Samson Agonistes" (1671), and several logical and theological works, having the assistance, in his blindness, of his daughters and some young men to whom he dictated. It is said that he taught his daughters to read foreign languages without understanding them, making their labor of reading to him thus unintelligently an irksome task.

Milton's final work, which he was preparing for the press at the time of his death, was a "Treatise on Christian Doctrine," a theological compendium which showed a spirit of fervent piety.

He died November 8, 1674, bequeathing to posterity, as his richest legacy among the many monuments of his genius, the greatest epic poem in the English tongue, "Paradise Lost."

This work was completed in 1665, after eight years of

labor. It stood in its day for the best religious thought and influenced the theology of many succeeding generations. It was not appreciated by most of the author's contemporaries, and he received for it only ten pounds. For all that, it has no "middle flight," but soars

> "Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
> Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme."

We cannot think of Milton's life as fortunate or happy in external conditions. His patrimony was scanty, his emoluments were few, his eyesight lost, and his domestic life uncongenial. His temperament, severe and stoical, was not calculated to give him serenity or satisfaction. His first wife died in 1653, leaving him three daughters, whom he called unfilial. His second wife, *née* Miss Woodcock, died in 1658, fifteen months after their marriage, and in 1663 he married Elizabeth Minshull, who survived him fifty-two years. In his old age he had the pain of seeing his country given over to frivolity and corruption, with Charles II. on the throne.

And yet, if lofty aspirations, transcendent abilities, and unconquerable religious faith have power to lift one above the mischances and misfortunes of life, Milton must have felt with satisfaction that he had won success out of seeming disaster and defeat.

THE EPIC POEM.

ILLUSTRATED BY MILTON'S "PARADISE LOST."

"THE noble and profound application of ideas to life," says Matthew Arnold, "is the most essential part of poetic greatness." This is the characteristic style of epic poetry. The word "epic" is derived from *epos*, a word, a tale; an epic poem is a narrative in verse, of an elevated character. The exploits of heroes are usually described; also events of great importance. For example, the subjects chosen by Milton in his great epic are: "the fate of worlds; the revolutions of heaven and of earth; rebellion against the supreme king, raised by the highest order of created beings; the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures, their forfeiture of immortality, and their restoration to hope and peace."

The great national epic poems of the world are Homer's "Iliad" and "Odyssey," for the Greeks; the book of "Job," for the Hebrew nation; the "Æneid" of Virgil, for the Latin race; the "Mahabharata" and the "Ramayana" of Hindu origin; Dante's "Divine Comedy," for the Italians; the "Nibelungenlied" of the Germans; the Spanish poem "Romances of the Cid"; and Milton's "Paradise Lost."

These meet the requirements of heroic epic verse, — that it should deal with great passions and great actions, either of superhuman beings or of men. Coleridge thinks that an epic poem of the highest kind must have a personal

interest; therefore Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered," by this canon, should be placed in a lower category than the epic poems above mentioned, because "in the destruction (or deliverance) of Jerusalem, no genius or skill can possibly preserve the interest for the hero from being merged in the interest for the event."

In the judgment of the same great authority, an epic poem must be either national or on a subject common to all mankind. Milton, in "Paradise Lost," chose the latter, and his theme, says Addison, is greater than either the "Iliad" or the "Æneid," because "it does not determine the fate of single persons or nations, but of a whole species." "There is an unquestionable magnificence in every part of 'Paradise Lost,' and indeed a much greater than could have been formed upon any pagan system." (*Spectator*, paper 267). "Paradise Lost" is the superior of these two epics in another respect. While Homer introduces some characters beneath the dignity of the epic, and Virgil falls short of Homer in both dignity and variety of the personages presented, Milton makes even Satan heroic; and where this lofty personification is impossible, as in the case of Sin and Death, the shadowy and fictitious lift the allegorical into epic dignity. In treating of human beings, the epic-heroic style is maintained by the great poet,—a most difficult task. Adam and Eve, as Addison points out, are shown "in the highest innocence and perfection, and in the most abject state of guilt and infirmity."

Not only must an epic poem present possible and natural creations of the imagination, but it must also abound in sublime conceptions. "Milton's characters,

most of them, lie out of nature, and were to be formed purely out of his invention. None but a poet of the most unbounded invention and the most exquisite judgment" could have combined, as Milton has done, the natural and the sublime with appropriate circumstances and conditions. There is nothing little, puerile, or low in any of the situations or conversations. Even Satan harangues his hosts in the grand style. Thus "Milton has carried our language to a greater height than any of the English poets have ever done before or after him, and made the sublimity of his style equal to that of his sentiments" (*Spectator*, 285).

To complete the interest awakened by the descriptions in "Paradise Lost," Milton not only preserves the dignity of the characters which "sport in the wide regions of possibility," but he also introduces a great variety of personages, illustrations, comparisons, and images. By this variety, he, like Homer in his agreeable episodes, relieves the reader's mind from the strain of a lofty subject, which if continued too long oppresses the mind.

From what has been said, it is easy to see how the epic differs from the ballad and the dramatic style. There is a dramatic element in "Paradise Lost," as when Satan delivers his magnificent address to "Thrones, Principalities, and Powers." But the drama, as Milton shows it in his "Samson Agonistes," has an entirely different cast of characters and situations. It has also a plot, and uses language with freedom and unconventionality.

"The ballad manner," says Matthew Arnold, "requires that an expression shall be plain and natural, and then it

asks no more." The epic requires that an expression shall be noble.

Matthew Arnold finds in the "Nibelungenlied" more of the qualities of the ballad manner than of the epic, inasmuch as "based on grand traditions, which had found expression in a grand *lyric* poetry, it is itself anything rather than a grand poem."

However this may be with reference to this particular poem (which Arnold, in spite of his criticism, calls an epic), there is such a marked lower pitch in the ballad, that its movement, diction, and theme will readily distinguish it from the stately epic verse. No one, for example, would ever mistake the style of Sir Walter Scott's poetry for that of Homer or Milton.

With regard to the meter of "Paradise Lost," Milton calls it "English Heroic verse without Rime"; we call it, familiarly and generally, blank verse. Milton regards "rime" as "no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame meeter." He claims esteem for his kind of versification, as "an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recover'd to Heroic Poem, from the troublesome and modern bondage of Rimeing."

In the use of blank verse by Milton, "the movement, the metrical cast corresponds," says Arnold, "with the mode of evolution of the thought; with the syntactical cast, and is indeed determined by it. In reading Milton, you never lose the sense of laborious and condensed fullness. With Milton, line runs into line and all is straitly bound together.

The effect is often very powerful"; but "this complicated evolution of the thought necessarily complicates the movement and rhythm." This accounts for the great variety of meter in Milton's epic poetry, and while the general effect is pleasing, its complications preclude any other definition than that it is Miltonic versification. As a model it is full of risks, because only a genius equal to that of Milton could preserve the grand style in the midst of such multitudinous variations.

In Taine's "English Literature," Book II., Chapter VI., he tells us that Milton "employed poetry in a new service. . . . He thus made for himself a composite and brilliant style, less natural than that of his precursors, less fit for effusions, less akin to the lively first glow of sensation, but more solid, more regular, more capable of concentrating in one large patch of light, all their sparklings and splendors." This is Taine's general criticism of Milton's poetry; but with regard to special phases of the poet's art, he speaks of Milton's "words of six cubits"; of the poet as "deprived of the dramatic sensibility which creates varied and living souls; he accumulates cold dissertations." But this critic allows that Milton aims at the sublime, and "arrives at his point, by the accumulation of splendors, by the sustained fullness of poetic song, by the greatness of his allegories, the loftiness of his sentiments, the description of infinite objects and heroic emotions." We mention the criticisms of this gifted French writer, because, in spite of self-contradictions, he is always interesting and reflects a powerful critical school of his own country.

From the comments which we have given above on Milton and the epic style, the conclusion is reached that the best writers and critics claim for an epic poem: (1) that it be elevated in subject, treatment, and language; (2) that it must have a personal interest, either national or common to humanity; (3) that it should be written neither in the ballad nor in the dramatic style; and (4) that the meter best suited to it, at least in the English tongue, is blank verse, with a wide latitude in the number of feet to the line, and in usages of rhythm.

Finally, that, all in all, Milton's "Paradise Lost" presents the best example of the epic poem in English Literature, sustaining itself on an elevated plane throughout its entire length, and destined to remain for all coming generations among the first of the great national epics of the world.

The Arguments for the two Books of "Paradise Lost" here given will be found under the Notes.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden Tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the Heavens and Earth
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support,
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first (for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell) say first what cause
Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favored of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides.
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
The infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
The Mother of Mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equaled the Most High,
If he opposed; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition; there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal. But his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,
Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.
At once, as far as Angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild:
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,

As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.
Such place Eternal Justice had prepared
For those rebellious; here their prison ordained
In utter darkness, and their portion set,
As far removed from God and light of Heaven
As from the center thrice to the utmost pole.
Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and, weltering by his side,
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and named
Beëlzebub. To whom the Arch-Enemy,
And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:
"If thou beëst he — but Oh how fallen! how changed
From him, who in the happy realms of light,
Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads, though bright! if he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
In equal ruin: into what pit thou seëst
From what height fallen, so much the stronger proved
He with his thunder: and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
Nor what the potent victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,

Though changed in outward luster, that fixed mind,
And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits armed,
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power opposed
In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost: the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield:
And what is else not to be overcome?
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
Doubted his empire — that were low indeed;
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall; since by fate the strength of gods
And this empyreal substance cannot fail;
Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."

So spake the apostate Angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair;
And him thus answered soon his bold compeer:

"O Prince, O Chief of many thronèd powers,
That led the embattled Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endangered Heaven's perpetual King,

And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate!
Too well I see and rue the dire event
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as gods and Heavenly essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remain
Invincible, and vigor soon returns,
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallowed up in endless misery.
But what if he our conqueror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire;
Or do him mightier service, as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep?
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminished, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?"

Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-Fiend replied:
"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labor must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft times may succeed, so as perhaps

Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
But see! the angry victor hath recalled
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heaven; the sulphurous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
The fiery surge that from the precipice
Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,
Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbor there;
And, re-assembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides,
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works

Created hugest that swim the ocean-stream.
Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixèd anchor in his scaly rind,
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wishèd morn delays.
So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,
Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence
Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others, and enraged might see
How all his malice served but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn
On Man by him seduced, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance poured.
  Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rolled
In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
He lights — if it were land that ever burned
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
And such appeared in hue, as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
And fueled entrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singèd bottom all involved

With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate,
Both glorying to have 'scaped the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal power.
"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat
That we must change for Heaven? this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equaled, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy forever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor, one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure; and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
The associates and co-partners of our loss,
Lie thus astonished on the oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"
So Satan spake; and him Beëlzebub

Thus answered: "Leader of those armies bright
Which but the Omnipotent none could have foiled,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers — heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle when it raged, in all assaults
Their surest signal — they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed —
No wonder, fallen such a pernicious height!"
He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast. The broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesolè,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear — to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand —
He walked with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marle, not like those steps
On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
Nathless he so endured, till on the beach
Of that inflamèd sea he stood, and called
His legions, Angel forms, who lay entranced,
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew

Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcases
And broken chariot-wheels: so thick bestrown,
Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He called so loud that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded: "Princes, Potentates,
Warriors, the flower of Heaven, once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal Spirits: or have ye chosen this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the conqueror, who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With scattered arms and ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern
The advantage, and descending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linkèd thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf?
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"
They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their General's voice they soon obeyed
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up called a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,

That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad Angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain:
A multitude, like which the populous North
Poured never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.
Forthwith, from every squadron and each band,
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great Commander; godlike shapes, and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities,
And powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones;
Though of their names in Heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and rased
By their rebellion from the Books of Life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till, wandering o'er the Earth,
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of Man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and the invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities.
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the heathen world.

Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,

Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,
At their great Emperor's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.
The chief were those who, from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on Earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, gods adored
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
Between the Cherubim; yea, often placed
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursèd things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First, Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard, that passed through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshiped in Rabba and her watery plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighborhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.
Next Chemos, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Elealè to the Asphaltic pool.

Peor his other name, when he enticed
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged
Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they who, from the bordering flood
Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baälim and Ashtaroth — those male,
These feminine. For Spirits, when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
Can execute their airy purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfill.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living Strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial gods; for which their heads as low
Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians called
Astarte, Queen of Heaven, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on the offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king whose heart, though large,
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,

Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark
Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off
In his own temple, on the grunsel-edge,
Where he fell flat, and shamed his worshipers:
Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
And downward fish; yet had his temple high
Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him followed Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also against the house of God was bold:
A leper once he lost and gained a king,
Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the gods
Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared
A crew who, under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek
Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms

Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
The infection, when their borrowed gold composed
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazèd ox —
Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed
From Egypt marching, equaled with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial came last, than whom a Spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself. To him no temple stood
Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who filled
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage; and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Exposed a matron, to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renowned,
The Ionian gods — of Javan's issue held
Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,
Their boasted parents: Titan, Heaven's first-born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seized
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;
So Jove usurping reigned. These, first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,

Their highest Heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Downcast and damp, yet such wherein appeared
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their Chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his countenance cast
Like doubtful hue. But he, his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised
Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears:
Then straight commands that, at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions, be upreared
His mighty standard. That proud honor claimed
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall:
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
The imperial ensign, which, full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden luster rich emblazed,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host up sent
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
With orient colors waving; with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appeared, and serried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move
In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised

To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle, and instead of rage
Deliberate valor breathed, firm and unmoved
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage,
With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force with fixèd thought,
Moved on in silence to soft pipes that charmed
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now
Advanced in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
Had to impose. He through the armèd files
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views — their order due,
Their visages and stature as of gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hardening in his strength
Glories; for never, since created Man,
Met such embodied force as, named with these,
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warred on by cranes: though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with the heroic race were joined
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond;
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell

By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread Commander. He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than Archangel ruined, and the excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
Above them all the Archangel; but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion, to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned
For ever now to have their lot in pain;
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendors flung
For his revolt; yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory withered: as, when Heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,
With singèd top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half inclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way:

"O myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers
Matchless, but with the Almighty! — and that strife
Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have feared
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to re-ascend,
Self-raised, and re-possess their native seat?
For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,
If counsels different, or danger shunned
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heaven, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provoked; our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not; that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife
There went a fame in Heaven that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation whom his choice regard
Should favor equal to the Sons of Heaven.
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere;

For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the Abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired,
For who can think submission? War, then, war
Open or understood, must be resolved."

He spake; and, to confirm his words, out flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged
Against the Highest, and fierce with graspèd arms
Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf — undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither, winged with speed,
A numerous brigad hastened: as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pickax armed,
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,
Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
From Heaven, for ev'n in Heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
Than aught of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
In vision beatific. By him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransacked the center, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Opened into the hill a spacious wound,
And digged out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best

Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength, and art are easily outdone
By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they, with incessant toil
And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion-dross.
A third as soon had formed within the ground
A various mold, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook:
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
Equaled in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
Stood fixed her stately height, and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide
Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth
And level pavement: from the archèd roof,

Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring entered, and the work some praise,
And some the architect: his hand was known
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,
Where scepter'd Angels held their residence,
And sat as princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his Hierarchy, the Orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard or unadored
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell
From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve, —
A summer's day; and with the setting sun
Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
On Lemnos, the Ægæan isle. Thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before; nor aught availed him now
To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he 'scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew to build in Hell.
  Meanwhile the wingèd Haralds, by command
Of sovran power, with awful ceremony
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called
From every band and squarèd regiment
By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended. All access was thronged, the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall

(Though like a covered field, where champions bold
Wont ride in armed, and at the Soldan's chair
Defied the best of Panim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance)
Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,
Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring-time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothèd plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubbed with balm, expatiate and confer
Their state-affairs. So thick the airy crowd
Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,
Behold a wonder! they but now who seemed
In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the Earth
Wheels her pale course; they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat,
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

BOOK II.

High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
To that bad eminence; and, from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain war with Heaven; and, by success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus displayed:
"Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heaven!
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigor, though oppressed and fallen,
I give not Heaven for lost: from this descent
Celestial Virtues rising will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me, though just right and the fixed laws of Heaven
Did first create your leader, next, free choice,
With what besides, in counsel or in fight,
Hath been achieved of merit, yet this loss,
Thus far at least recovered, hath much more
Established in a safe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? Where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there

From faction; for none sure will claim in Hell
Precedence, none whose portion is so small
Of present pain that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heaven, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assured us; and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate; who can advise may speak."
He ceased; and next him Moloch, scepter'd king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair.
His trust was with the Eternal to be deemed
Equal in strength, and rather than be less
Cared not to be at all; with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse,
He recked not, and these words thereafter spake:
"My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
The signal to ascend, sit lingering here,
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay? No! let us rather choose,
Armed with Hell-flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heaven's high towers to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear
Infernal thunder, and for lightning see

Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his Angels, and his throne itself
Mixed with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat; descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? The ascent is easy then;
The event is feared: should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction — if there be in Hell
Fear to be worse destroyed! What can be worse
Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemned
In this abhorrèd deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end,
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorable and the torturing hour
Call us to penance? More destroyed than thus,
We should be quite abolished, and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which, to the height enraged,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential — happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being! —
Or if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel

Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge."
He ended, frowning, and his look denounced
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than gods. On the other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane;
A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seemed
For dignity composed, and high exploit.
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low;
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful: yet he pleased the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began:
"I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate, if what was urged
Main reason to persuade immediate war
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success;
When he who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge? The towers of Heaven are filled
With armèd watch, that render all access
Impregnable; oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of Night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound

Heaven's purest light, yet our great enemy
All incorruptible would on his throne
Sit unpolluted, and the ethereal mold
Incapable of stain would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
The almighty victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us, that must be our cure—
To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated Night,
Devoid of sense and motion? And who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry foe
Can give it, or will ever? How he can
Is doubtful; that he never will is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? 'Wherefore cease we, then?'
Say they who counsel war; 'we are decreed,
Reserved, and destined to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse?' Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What when we fled amain, pursued and strook
With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this Hell then seemed
A refuge from those wounds. Or when we lay
Chained on the burning lake? that sure was worse.
What if the breath that kindled those grim fires,
Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,

And plunge us in the flames? or from above
Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? What if all
Her stores were opened, and this firmament
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps,
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurled,
Each on his rock transfixed, the sport and prey
Of racking whirlwinds, or forever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
There to converse with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,
Ages of hopeless end! This would be worse.
War therefore, open or concealed, alike
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view? He from Heaven's height
All these our motions vain sees and derides,
Not more almighty to resist our might
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heaven
Thus trampled, thus expelled to suffer here
Chains and these torments? Better these than worse,
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust
That so ordains: this was at first resolved,
If we were wise, against so great a foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink, and fear
What yet they know must follow — to endure

Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of their conqueror. This is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our supreme foe in time may much remit
His anger, and perhaps, thus far removed,
Not mind us not offending, satisfied
With what is punished; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapor, or inured not feel,
Or changed at length, and to the place conformed
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light;
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe."
Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb,
Counseled ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,
Not peace; and after him thus Mammon spake:
"Either to disenthrone the King of Heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain
Our own right lost: him to unthrone we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife.
The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter; for what place can be for us
Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord supreme
We overpower? Suppose he should relent
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive
Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne

With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forced Halleluiahs; while he lordly sits,
Our envied sovran, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odors and ambrosial flowers,
Our servile offerings? This must be our task
In Heaven, this our delight; how wearisome
Eternity so spent in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue,
By force impossible, by leave obtained
Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
Free, and to none accountable, preferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
We can create, and in what place soe'er
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain
Through labor and endurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne, from whence deep thunders roar,
Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell!
As he our darkness, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil
Wants not her hidden luster, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can Heaven show more?
Our torments also may in length of time
Become our elements, these piercing fires
As soft as now severe, our temper changed

Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order, how in safety best we may
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are and where, dismissing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise."
He scarce had finished, when such murmur filled
The assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Seafaring men o'erwatched, whose bark by chance,
Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: such applause was heard
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,
Advising peace; for such another field
They dreaded worse than Hell; so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michaël
Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise,
By policy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.
Which when Beëlzebub perceived, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed
A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin. Sage he stood,
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake:
"Thrones and imperial Powers, Offspring of Heaven,
Ethereal Virtues! or these titles now

Must we renounce, and, changing style, be called
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire — doubtless! while we dream,
And know not that the King of Heaven hath doomed
This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne, but to remain
In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,
Under the inevitable curb, reserved
His captive multitude. For he, be sure,
In height or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt, but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron scepter rule
Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.
What sit we then projecting peace and war?
War hath determined us, and foiled with loss
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be given
To us enslaved, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But, to our power, hostility and hate,
Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the conqueror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel?
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
With dangerous expedition to invade
Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise? There is a place
(If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven

Err not), another world, the happy seat
Of some new race called Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though less
In power and excellence, but favored more
Of him who rules above; so was his will
Pronounced among the gods, and by an oath,
That shook Heaven's whole circumference, confirmed.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit, of what mold,
Or substance, how endued, and what their power,
And where their weakness, how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,
And Heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie exposed,
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defense who hold it; here, perhaps,
Some advantageous act may be achieved
By sudden onset: either with Hell-fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess
All as our own, and drive, as we are driven,
The puny habitants; or if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our confusion, and our joy upraise
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurled headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss,
Faded so soon! Advise if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires." Thus Beëlzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised
By Satan, and in part proposed; for whence,
But from the author of all ill, could spring

So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of Mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleased highly those infernal States, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews:
"Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,
Synod of gods, and, like to what ye are,
Great things resolved; which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence, with neighboring arms
And opportune excursion, we may chance
Re-enter Heaven; or else in some mild zone
Dwell not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,
Secure, and at the brightening orient beam
Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious air,
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But first, whom shall we send
In search of this new world? whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark, unbottomed, infinite Abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight,
Upborne with indefatigable wings
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle? What strength, what art, can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict senteries and stations thick
Of Angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection, and we now no less
Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send
The weight of all, and our last hope, relies."

This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appeared
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt; but all sat mute,
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In other's countenance read his own dismay,
Astonished. None among the choice and prime
Of those Heaven-warring champions could be found
So hardy as to proffer or accept,
Alone, the dreadful voyage; till at last
Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride
Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake:
"O Progeny of Heaven, empyreal Thrones!
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seized us, though undismayed. Long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light;
Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
Ninefold, and gates of burning adamant,
Barred over us, prohibit all egress.
These passed, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential Night receives him next,
Wide-gaping, and with utter loss of being
Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.
If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers and as hard escape?
But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,
And this imperial sovranty, adorned
With splendor, armed with power, if aught proposed
And judged with public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,

Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honor, due alike
To him who reigns and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest
High honored sits? Go therefore, mighty Powers,
Terror of Heaven, though fallen; intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render Hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion; intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
Deliverance for us all: this enterprise
None shall partake with me." Thus saying, rose
The Monarch, and prevented all reply;
Prudent, lest, from his resolution raised,
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refused) what erst they feared,
And, so refused, might in opinion stand
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more the adventure than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose;
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful reverence prone; and as a god
Extol him equal to the Highest in Heaven.
Nor failed they to express how much they praised
That for the general safety he despised
His own; for neither do the Spirits damned
Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on Earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition varnished o'er with zeal.

Thus they their doubtful consultations dark

Ended, rejoicing in their matchless Chief:
As when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the North-wind sleeps, o'erspread
Heaven's cheerful face, the low'ring element
Scowls o'er the darkened landscape snow or shower;
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
O shame to men! Devil with devil damned
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace; and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the Earth, each other to destroy:
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait!
  The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth
In order came the grand infernal Peers;
Midst came their mighty Paramount, and seemed
Alone the antagonist of Heaven, nor less
Than Hell's dread Emperor, with pomp supreme,
And god-like imitated state; him round
A globe of fiery Seraphim inclosed
With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpet's regal sound the great result:
Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchymy,
By Harald's voice explained; the hollow Abyss
Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell
With deafening shout returned them loud acclaim.
Thence more at ease their minds and somewhat raised

By false presumptuous hope, the rangèd powers
Disband; and, wandering, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him perplexed, where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours till his great Chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing or in swift race contend,
As at the Olympian games or Pythian fields;
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form:
As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds; before each van
Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears,
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
From either end of Heaven the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar:
As when Alcides, from Œchalia crowned
With conquest, felt the envenomed robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Œta threw
Into the Euboic sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
By doom of battle; and complain that Fate
Free Virtue should enthrall to Force or Chance.
Their song was partial, but the harmony
(What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
(For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense)

Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy!
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm the obdured breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams:
Abhorrèd Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,

A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire.
Thither, by harpy-footed Furies haled,
At certain revolutions all the damned
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immovable, infixed, and frozen round,
Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink;
But Fate withstands, and, to oppose the attempt,
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In confused march forlorn, the adventrous bands,
With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,
Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest. Through many a dark and dreary vale
They passed, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse

Than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire.
Meanwhile the Adversary of God and Man,
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and toward the gates of Hell
Explores his solitary flight; sometimes
He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave towering high.
As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood,
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,
Ply stemming nightly toward the pole: so seemed
Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear
Hell-bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable Shape.
The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed
With mortal sting. About her middle round
A cry of Hell-hounds never-ceasing barked
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal. . . .
. . . Far less abhorred than these
Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, called
In secret, riding through the air she comes,

Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the laboring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other Shape —
If shape it might be called that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
For each seemed either — black it stood as Night,
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart; what seemed his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
The monster moving onward came as fast,
With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.
The undaunted Fiend what this might be admired,
Admired, not feared — God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valued he nor shunned —
And with disdainful look thus first began:
"Whence and what art thou, execrable Shape,
That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass,
That be assured, without leave asked of thee.
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heaven."
To whom the Goblin, full of wrath, replied:
"Art thou that Traitor-Angel, art thou he,
Who first broke peace in Heaven and faith, till then
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons,
Conjured against the Highest, for which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are here condemned
To waste eternal days in woe and pain?
And reckon'st thou thyself with Spirits of Heaven,
Hell-doomed, and breath'st defiance here and scorn,
Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,

Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings,
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before."
So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape,
So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deform. On the other side,
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrified, and like a comet burned
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Leveled his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend; and such a frown
Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds,
With Heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid-air:
So frowned the mighty combatants, that Hell
Grew darker at their frown; so matched they stood;
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds
Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the snaky Sorceress, that sat
Fast by Hell-gate and kept the fatal key,
Risen, and with hideous outcry rushed between.
"O father, what intends thy hand," she cried,
"Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom;
For him who sits above, and laughs the while
At thee ordained his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids —

His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both!"
She spake, and at her words the hellish Pest
Forbore; then these to her Satan returned:
"So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends, till first I know of thee
What thing thou art, thus double-formed, and why,
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son.
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee."
To whom thus the Portress of Hell-gate replied:
"Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deemed so fair
In Heaven, when at the assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim with thee combined
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surprised thee; dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,
Then shining Heavenly-fair, a goddess armed,
Out of thy head I sprung. Amazement seized
All the host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid
At first, and called me *Sin*, and for a sign
Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,
I pleased, and with attractive graces won
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing
Becam'st enamored; . . .
. . . Meanwhile war arose,
And fields were fought in Heaven; wherein remained
(For what could else?) to our almighty foe

Clear victory; to our part loss and rout
Through all the Empyrean. Down they fell,
Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
Into this deep; and in the general fall
I also: at which time this powerful key
Into my hands was given, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
Alone. . . .
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transformed; but he, my imbred enemy,
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,
Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out *Death!*
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed
From all her caves, and back resounded *Death!*

* * * * * * * * *

Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on,
And me, his parent, would full soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involved, and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounced.
But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though tempered heavenly; for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist."

She finished; and the subtle Fiend his lore
Soon learned, now milder, and thus answered smooth:

"Dear daughter — since thou claim'st me for thy sire, —

* * * * * * * * *

I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain
Both him and thee, and all the Heavenly host

Of Spirits that, in our just pretenses armed,
Fell with us from on high. From them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
The unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wandering quest a place foretold
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created vast and round, a place of bliss
In the purlieus of Heaven, and therein placed
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room, though more removed,
Lest Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,
Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught
Than this more secret, now designed, I haste
To know; and, this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air, embalmed
With odors: there ye shall be fed and filled
Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey."
He ceased, for both seemed highly pleased, and Death
Grinned horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be filled, and blessed his maw
Destined to that good hour. No less rejoiced
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire:
"The key of this infernal pit, by due
And by command of Heaven's all-powerful King,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatched by living might.
But what owe I to his commands above,
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confined,

Inhabitant of Heaven and Heavenly-born,
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamors compassed round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey
But thee? whom follow? Thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end."
  Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And, towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up-drew,
Which but herself not all the Stygian powers
Could once have moved; then in the keyhole turns
The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She opened, but to shut
Excelled her power; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a bannered host,
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace-mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension; where length, breadth, and height,
And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night

And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light-armed or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere
He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns; next him, high arbiter,
Chance governs all. Into this wild Abyss,
The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mixed
Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless the Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds —
Into this wild Abyss the wary Fiend
Stood on the brink of Hell and looked a while,
Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
With all her battering engines bent to rase
Some capital city; or less than if this frame
Of Heaven were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The steadfast Earth. At last his sail-broad vans
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league,

As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
Audacious; but, that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity: all unawares,
Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb-down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and niter, hurried him
As many miles aloft; that fury stayed —
Quenched in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land — nigh foundered, on he fares
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a gryphon through the wilderness
With wingèd course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stealth
Had from his wakeful custody purloined
The guarded gold: so eagerly the Fiend
O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.
At length a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds and voices all confused,
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence. Thither he plies
Undaunted, to meet there whatever Power
Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
Bordering on light; when straight behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
Wide on the wasteful Deep! With him enthroned
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name

Of Demogorgon; Rumor next and Chance,
And Tumult and Confusion all embroiled,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
To whom Satan, turning boldly, thus: "Ye Powers
And Spirits of this nethermost Abyss,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy,
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint
Wandering this darksome desert, as my way
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
Alone and without guide, half lost, I seek,
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with Heaven; or if some other place,
From your dominion won, the Ethereal King
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound. Direct my course:
Directed, no mean recompense it brings
To your behoof, if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expelled, reduce
To original darkness and your sway
(Which is my present journey), and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient Night.
Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge!"
Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
With faltering speech and visage incomposed,
Answered: "I know thee, stranger, who thou art,
That mighty leading Angel, who of late
Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.
I saw and heard; for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence through the frighted deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded; and Heaven-gates
Poured out by millions her victorious bands,
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve

That little which is left so to defend,
Encroached on still through our intestine broils
Weakening the scepter of old Night: first Hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heaven and Earth, another world
Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain
To that side Heaven from whence your legions fell.
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger. Go, and speed!
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain."
He ceased; and Satan stayed not to reply,
But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renewed
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environed, wins his way; harder beset
And more endangered, than when Argo passed
Through Bosporus betwixt the justling rocks;
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunned
Charybdis, and by the other whirlpool steered:
So he with difficulty and labor hard
Moved on, with difficulty and labor he;
But, he once passed, soon after, when Man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain,
Following his track (such was the will of Heaven)
Paved after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length,
From Hell continued, reaching the utmost orb
Of this frail world; by which the Spirits perverse
With easy intercourse pass to and fro
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good Angels guard by special grace.
But now at last the sacred influence

Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night
A glimmering dawn. Here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,
As from her outmost works, a broken foe,
With tumult less and with less hostile din;
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off the empyreal Heaven, extended wide
In circuit, undetermined square or round,
With opal towers and battlements adorned
Of living sapphire, once his native seat;
And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
This pendent world, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude, close by the moon.
Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accurst, and in a cursèd hour, he hies.

NOTES

ON

PARADISE LOST. — BOOKS I. AND II.

Book I. The Argument. This First Book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed: then touches the prime cause of his fall, the Serpent, or rather Satan in the Serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven with all his crew into the great Deep. Which action passed over, the Poem hastes into the midst of things; presenting Satan with his Angels now fallen into Hell, described here, not in the Center (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed) but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: here Satan with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion; calls up him who, next in order and dignity, lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded; they rise: their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders, named according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech; comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven; but tells them lastly of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in Heaven; for that there were Angels long before this visible creation was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the Deep: the infernal Peers there sit in council.

Line 6. Poets in ancient times invoked the aid of the Muses. Milton, however, appeals not to one of the nine Muses, but to the Muse of Sacred Song.

Line 15. "Above the Aonian mount." Milton invokes a higher aid, the help of the Divine Spirit, whose seat was above Helicon, the favorite haunt, in Bœotia, of the nine heathen goddesses called the Muses. Siloa's brook, near Mount Zion, is preferred to the fountain of Aganippe, on Mount Helicon. Read, in this connection, "The Spectator," No. 303.

Line 34. "The infernal Serpent." Genesis iii. 1.

Line 45. "Hurled headlong." Isaiah xiv. 12. Milton borrows much of his imagery from the Old Testament. Read this chapter, verses 9–15, as an illustration.

Line 48. "Adamantine chains." Spenser: "Together linked in adamantine chains."

Line 63. "Darkness visible." Compare Seneca, Ep. 57: "Quæ nobis præstant, ut non *per tenebras videamus, sed ut ipsas.*"

Line 70. "Place Eternal Justice had prepared." Matt. xxv. 41. It is impossible to follow and to understand this poem without frequent reference to the Bible. Milton derives not only imagery, but ideas, from it.

Line 84. Compare Hector fallen, "Æneid," II. 274 *et alii.* For an analysis of Satan's speech, read "The Spectator," No. 303.

Line 105. "What though the field be lost?" Such grand speeches as this make Satan the hero of this epic. Notice, as you read, how he holds out to the very last, in defiance.

Line 127. "His bold compeer." Beëlzebub. Title of a heathen deity, to whom the Jews ascribed the sovereignty of the evil spirits. Look up references to Beëlzebub in Concordance. The student should study the differences, in infernal character, given by Milton to Satan and his compeers.

Line 140. "Invincible." Compare the "Prometheus" of Æschylus, verse 1060.

Line 153. "What can it then avail?" Beëlzebub thinks, by renewing allegiance to the Almighty, to escape the severest vengeance. He is more willing than Satan to yield.

Line 157. Consider carefully Satan's argument.

Line 169. "But see! the angry victor hath recalled." This touch gives dramatic vividness to the situation. The scene opens like a picture, Heaven's warriors in the distance.

Line 181. "Void of light." Compare Dante's "Inferno," V. 28: "Luogo d' ogni luce muto."

Line 190. "What reinforcement we may gain." Notice the profound thought in the lines 190, 191.

Line 195. "Prone on the flood." Dante would have given Satan's size in cubits. Milton does better by offering indefinite measure to the imagination. Look up the Titans, the hundred-handed Briareos (Ægæon), and Typhon, in Smith's "Dictionary of Greek and Roman Mythology."

Line 206. "With fixèd anchor in his scaly rind." A picture in England of a ship anchored on a whale has the motto "*Nusquam tuta fides.*"

Line 221. "Forthwith upright he rears." Compare lines 210–213. Without permission he could not have risen up. Milton shows the Almighty as always superior to Satan.

Line 239. "Both glorying." They do not attribute escape to the superior will, although they know the fact.

Line 250. "Hail, horrors! hail, Infernal world." This exultant salutation must not be taken as bravado. It is a genuine Satanic acceptance of his new kingdom, as the following lines fully show.

Line 263. "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven." Recall Julius Cæsar's remark: "Better be the first man in a village than the second in Rome."

Line 284. "His ponderous shield." Dr. Johnson ("Lives of the Poets," I. 160) says of this passage: "His [Milton's] great excellence is amplitude. Thus, comparing the shield of Satan to the orb of the Moon, he crowds the imagination with the discovery of the telescope, and all the wonders which the telescope discovers."

Line 288. "Optic glass." Milton visited Galileo at Florence. Fesolè is a hill near Florence. As to Milton's astronomical knowledge, compare Raphael's words to Adam, "Paradise Lost," VIII. 160–167.

Line 292. "His spear." Cowley's "David," Lib. III. 47: —

> "His spear the trunk was of a lofty tree,
> Which nature meant some tall ship's mast to be."

Line 307. "Busiris." A fabulous personage. The name is used by Milton poetically for Pharaoh. Exodus xiv.

Line 338. "As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son." Exodus x. 13–15.

Line 353. "Rhene or the Danaw." Rhine or Danube.

Line 384. "Their altars by his altar." Compare 1 Kings xi. 1–8

Line 392. "First, Moloch." Compare the characteristics of these fallen spirits. Read "The Spectator," No. 309.

Line 418. "Till good Josiah." 2 Kings xxiii.

Line 446. "Thammuz came next behind." Thammuz, a Phœnician deity, identified with Adonis. The river Adonis in Asia Minor (Turkish, Ibrahim Bassa). A stream discolored by red earth at certain seasons of the year. Compare Ezekiel viii. 13, 14.

Line 460. "Grunsel-edge." Ground-sill.

Line 484. "The calf in Oreb." Exodus xxxii. 1–6.

Line 489. "Bleating gods." Satirical allusion to calf-gods.

Line 508. "The Ionian gods." Look up these mythological beings in any classical dictionary. Jove, Titan, etc.

Line 550. "Dorian mood." One of the three ancient kinds of music inciting to courage.

Line 551. "Recorders." Ancient musical instrument, like a flageolet.

Line 556. "Swage." Assuage.

Line 578. "That fought at Thebes and Ilium," etc. In the ten consecutive lines, Milton crowds together, as was his custom, innumerable warriors. Is this a fault, or an aid to the imagination?

Line 589. "He, above the rest." Compare Dante's "Il Purgatorio," V. 14. This is one of Milton's finest paragraphs.

Line 598. "And with fear of change." The ancients looked upon eclipses as omens of disaster. Also, "Staring comets, that look kingdoms dead." (Crashaw, "Steps to the Temple.")

Line 609. "Amerced." Punished with a fine. Spenser uses the word. Compare Deuteronomy xxii. 19.

Line 642. "Which tempted our attempt." Addison calls this alliteration a blemish in style; a kind of jingle in words. It is frequently used by Milton. *Ex. gr.* "Behemoth, biggest born of earth."

Line 663. "He spake; and, to confirm his words." Observe the grand style of this passage and its suggestion of ferocious daring.

Line 679. "Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell." The god of avarice. Notice the striking description in the whole passage.

Line 711. "Rose like an exhalation." Compare Marlowe's "Did like a shooting exhalation glide." ("Hero and Leander.")

Line 740. "Mulciber." Surname of Vulcan.

Line 756. "At Pandemonium." Place or palace of *all* the evil spirits.

Line 774. "Expatiate." Latin, *spatior*, to walk abroad; later meaning, to enlarge upon in language.

Line 780. "Pygmean race." According to Homer, a race of dwarfs, perpetually at war with the cranes. Why does Milton diminish the size of the fallen angels?

Line 784. "The moon sits arbitress." Queen or ruler. Compare Horace's "Ode," 12, 47 : —

"Velut inter ignes, luna, minores."

Line 793. "And in their own dimensions." Why does the poet picture "the great seraphic lords" as retaining their huge bulk?

Book II. The Argument. The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal, or not much inferior, to themselves, about this time to be created. Their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search: Satan, their chief, undertakes alone the voyage; is honored and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell-gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them; by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

The magnificent conception of Satan and the Fallen Angels, in these two Books of "Paradise Lost," is, of course, the product of the poet's imagination, founded on slight and obscure references in the Bible; as, for example, in the Epistle of Jude, verse 6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate."

Macaulay, in his "Essay on Milton," defends the poet from Dr. Johnson's charge that "Paradise Lost" lacks metaphysical accuracy, by saying that "Poetry, which relates to beings of another world, ought to be at once mysterious and picturesque." Also, that "it was impossible for the poet to adopt altogether the material or the immaterial system. He therefore took his stand on the debatable ground. He left the whole in ambiguity." Macaulay then shows how Milton's fiends, unlike the supernatural beings of Dante, "have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings; a certain dim resemblance to men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions and veiled in mysterious gloom."

Taine, in his "English Literature" (Vol. I. 452), says: "Milton needs the grand and infinite. His eyes are only content in limitless space, and he produces colossuses to fill it."

The student may well keep these ideas in mind as he studies these splendid creations of genius; especially in the first and second books, where the Argument deals solely with the supernatural. Other portions of "Paradise Lost" are more pleasing, but (as Coleridge declares) "Milton is finer in Hell than in Heaven," although, "finest of all in his earthly Paradise."

Line 1. "High on a throne of royal state." This council of the infernal spirits is given by the poet early in the poem, because the plan or plot turns on the Satanic proposal to accomplish the ruin of mankind. Other great matters, which are chronologically earlier, such as the first battle against Satan and his angels and their expulsion from Heaven, are placed in the sixth and seventh books, as an episode, to preserve the unity of action in the poem. Read in this connection "The Spectator," No. 267.

The opening passage in Book II. is considered one of the most magnificent in the poem, and is often quoted. It is also used as an exercise in elocution. The student will do well to commit it to memory.

The Latin scholar will find a pleasing similarity of style in the second book of Ovid's "Metamorphoses," the first line of which is

"Regia Solis erat sublimibus alta columnis."

Book II. of "Paradise Lost" is divided into two parts. The first part (lines 1–628 inclusive) describes the consultation or debate, as to the best course for the Fallen Spirits to pursue in order to improve their condition. The issue presented is peace or war.

The student should analyze the speeches of Satan, Moloch, Belial, Mammon, and Beëlzebub, not failing to notice the character of each, as manifested in the counsel which is proffered by each.

Satan's harangue is a demand for continued opposition "whether of open war or covert guile," and the height of assumption is reached when he speaks of Heaven as "our just inheritance."

Moloch calls for open war. Better suffer annihilation than dwell forever in torment. If annihilation be impossible, then at least revenge.

Belial counsels submission rather than to invite a worse fate, and urges that perhaps the Almighty may in time remit his anger, satisfied with the punishment. Then the raging fires will slacken, and Hell's horrors become more mild.

Mammon argues that it is vain to hope to dethrone Heaven's King. Therefore, "rather seek our own good from ourselves, and from our own live to ourselves." "Our torments," he declares, "also may in length of time become our elements; . . . nor want we skill or art,

from whence to raise magnificence." Thus, in his view, "All things invite to peaceful counsels and the settled state of order, dismissing quite all thoughts of war." He is applauded by the fiends for his advice.

Beëlzebub, "Majestic though in ruin," assumes that the Almighty will lose no part of his kingdom by further revolt against Him, and suggests "some easier enterprise." He then reveals the existence of another world, "the happy seat of some new race called Man." He urges the conquest or seduction of the new race, in order that "their God may prove their foe, and with repenting hand, abolish his own works. This would surpass common revenge and interrupt his joy in our confusion."

This "bold design" pleased the infernals, but when some one was called for to undertake the perilous attempt

". . . all sat mute,
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts."

Then Satan assumed the enterprise to seek out the new race of man, even though he must pass "through all the coasts of dark destruction." The Stygian council then dissolved.

This is a mere outline of the debate, which the student may complete by analyzing the different arguments used by the archfiends, and comparing their various suggestions with the characteristics of Mammon, Moloch, and the rest, as given by Milton in Book I.

This study will uncover the depth of Milton's wonderful delineation of evil characters, and awaken a new interest in the two books, which no cursory reading of them can do. It will also furnish themes for dissertations or debates of great educational value in the line of English composition.

Line 67. "Black fire." "Ignes atros," Lucan, "Ph." II. 301.

Line 97. "This essential." Essence, or substance.

Line 113. "Could make the worse appear the better reason." Often quoted. Compare Valerius Flaccus, "Argonautica" Liber 3, 645: —

". . . . . potioribus ille
Deteriora fovens, semperque inversa tueri
Durus."

Line 142. "Our final hope is flat despair." Compare Book I., lines 190, 191.

Line 146. "To be no more." Compare this and the following lines with Shakespeare's "Hamlet," Act III., Scene 1: "To be or not

to be, that is the question," and "Measure for Measure," Act III., Scene 1, Claudio's answer to Isabel.

Line 220. "This horror will grow mild," etc. This and the following line are one of the few instances of *rhyme* in the poem.

Line 302. "A pillar of state." Cf. Shakespeare's "Henry VI." II. 1.

Line 348. "Of some new race called Man." Cf. Book VII. 154.

Line 435. "Immures us round *ninefold.*" Perhaps in harmony with the line, "Et novies Styx interfusa coercet." Other authorities say that the Styx flows *seven* times around Hades.

Line 457. "Intend at home." "Intende animum."

Line 482. "For neither do the spirits damned." What is the reason given by Milton for this assertion? Is the reason a valid one?

Line 513. "Horrent." Bristling with points.

Line 531. What was Milton's idea of supernatural beings? See Book VI. 344–353; V. 574; VI. 656; V. 407. On this point consult "Masterpieces of Michelangelo and Milton," Part II. Silver, Burdett & Company, Publishers.

Line 542. "Alcides." What is this fable concerning the poisoned robe of Hercules? Who was Lichas?

Line 577. "Abhorrèd Styx." Look up this river in a classical dictionary, also Acheron, Cocytus, and Phlegethon.

Line 623. "For evil only good." Possibly the poet here means to affirm that all evil is a means of ultimate good.

Line 628. "Gorgons and Hydras." Huge monsters of the lower regions. "Hydra-headed" is a common simile to denote an evil which constantly reappears after being vanquished. "Chimæra" had three heads. Virgil places these monsters at the gate of Orcus.

Line 629. "Meanwhile the Adversary of God and Man." The remainder of Book II. is taken up with an account of Satan's journey towards the new world, and his meeting with Sin and Death.

Line 640. "Trading." Treading, in the sense of moving on.

Line 648. "Before the gates there sat." The shadowy and fictitious beings, Sin and Death, are not, in the opinion of Addison ("Spectator," No. 273), proper actors in an epic poem. There is not the requisite probability annexed to them. They are wholly chimerical and impossible. They are not only grotesque, but vulgar.

Line 655. "Cerberean." What was Cerberus?

Line 678. "Admired." Regarded with wonder. Shakespeare, "admired disorder."

Line 692. "The third part of Heaven's sons." Cf. Revelation xii. 4.

Line 693. "Conjured." Summoned by oath.

Line 708. "Comet." Compare Virgil's "Æneid," X. 272.

Line 727. "O father!" See line 757. Where did Milton borrow the idea in this line? What full-armed being sprung from the head of Jove? Deriving Sin from Satan, Milton acquits the Almighty of originating evil.

Line 803. "Grim Death, my son and foe." James i. 15. "Foe," because created to destroy.

Line 842. "The buxom air." Compliant.

Line 870. "Thy daughter and thy darling." Spoken ironically.

Line 898. "For Hot," etc. Milton transfers here, almost literally, Ovid's expression, Liber I., line 19, "Metamorphoses."

Line 927. "Sail-broad vans." "Pennarum vela," Lucretius VI. 743.

Line 942. "Both oar and sail." Compare Book VII. 440.

Line 945. "Arimaspian." "Prometheus" of Æschylus, V. 810. Milton has the habit of referring to mythological personages under unusual titles.

Line 968. "To whom Satan, turning boldly, thus." Notice Satan's skillful appeal for guidance, "Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge" (line 987). The reply of Chaos is in the same strain of opposition to the Almighty, who despoils his realm by creating new worlds. Chaos answers Satan, "Go, and speed! Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain" (lines 1008, 1009).

Line 1017. "Argo." The ship of the Argonauts, in search of the golden fleece. See Art. Cyclopedia.

Line 1019. "Or when Ulysses." Scylla and Charybdis, two rocks between Italy and Sicily. ("Odyssey" XII.)

Line 1024. "Sin and Death amain." The bridge from Hell, built by Sin and Death, is marvelously constructed. See Book X. 293–320.

Line 1052. "This pendent world." "Measure for Measure," Act III., Scene 1.

Milton's Satan, Coleridge says, "warring against the Supreme Being, seems to contradict the idea of a Supreme Being." But the origin of evil was the great controversy of his age, and the poet wished to show that evil might arise "out of an act of the will itself."

But, for all that, Milton has thrown around the character of Satan "a grandeur of sufferance and a ruined splendor, which constitute the very height of poetic sublimity." (Coleridge's Lecture X.)

Taine (Book II., Chap. VI.) says of Milton's Satan, that "the ridiculous devil of the middle ages, a horned enchanter, a petty and

mischievous ape, has become a giant and a hero. Like a conquered and vanquished Cromwell, he remains admired and obeyed by those whom he has drawn into the abyss. It was he who in Hell roused his dejected troops and planned the ruin of man; he who, passing the guarded gates and the endless chaos, gained for Hell almost all the sons of Adam. Though wounded, he triumphs, for the thunder which smote his head, left his heart invincible."

> " . . . . The unconquerable will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit or yield."
> " Paradise Lost," Book I. 106–108.

Thus Satan becomes the hero of Milton's epic, although it must always be borne in mind that he is the creation of the poet's imagination, rather than the Great Adversary of Man mentioned in the Bible.

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